The image of his power lay then in me:
And, in the administration of his law,
Whiles I was busy for the commonwealth,
Your highness pleased to forget my place,
The majesty and power of law and justice,
The image of the king whom I presented,
And struck me in my very seat of judgment[6];
Whereon, as an offender to your father,
I gave bold way to my authority,
And did commit you. If the deed were ill,
Be you contented, wearing now the garland,
To have a son set your decrees at nought;
To pluck down justice from your awful bench;
To trip the course of law[7], and blunt the sword
That guards the peace and safety of your person:
—Nay, more; to spurn at your most royal image,
And mock your workings in a second body[8].
Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours:
Be now the father, and propose a son[9]:
Hear your own dignity so much profan'd,
See your most dreadful laws so loosely slighted,
Behold yourself so by a son disdain'd;
And then imagine me taking your part,
And, in your power, soft silencing your son:
After this cold considerance, sentence me;

[6] And struck me in my very seat of judgment:] See the note at the end of this play. Bo SWELL.

[7] To trip the course of law,] To defeat the process of justice: a metaphor taken from the act of tripping a runner. JOHNSON.

So, in Hamlet:

"Then *trip* him, that his heels may kick at heaven."

STEEVENS.

[8] And mock your workings in a second body:] To treat with contempt your acts executed by a representative. JOHNSON.

[9] —and PROPOSE a son:] Let image to yourself a son, contrive for a moment to think you have one. So, in Titus Andronicus:

« »—a thousand deaths I could *propose,*" STEEVENS.